

VCU radio station to receive funding for FM transmitter

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The university allocated \$30,000 last Friday to the SGA Executive Committee to fund the purchase of an FM transmitter for VCU's college radio station, WVCW.

The allocated funds will be taken from the spring 1993 rollover of student activity fees, Maryann Jayne, chairperson of the SGA Funding Committee, said Monday in her committee report to the SGA Senate.

Robert Fleskes, general manager of WVCW, said the station has actively pursued the possibility of acquiring an FM frequency for 27 years.

"This step should have been the starting point," he said. "You aren't a radio station unless you're on the air; we've been on the air but we can't get heard."

Fleskes said he is frustrated because most students cannot receive WVCW. Currently, the station is receivable only on 640 AM in university buildings.

"An FM frequency would put VCU on the radio map," he said. "Radio is built for commuters and you can't even hear us in your car. An FM frequency is the next logical step; it's the only step."

"I was upset that the University of Richmond, with a student population of about 6,000, has an FM station and VCU, with over 22,000 and the only accredited mass

communications school in the state, doesn't," Mike Stanley, SGA president, said.

Stanley said he attended a meeting in 1991 in which WVCW proposed obtaining an FM frequency to several university officials. He said the officials were impressed by the station's proposal but declined financial assistance.

Stanley said he and Fleskes have since looked for alternative means to fund the project.

"I thought the SGA should be able to do something," Stanley said. "If WVCW goes FM, it will benefit every student and create a higher quality of life on campus."

Fleskes said the radio station might never use the \$30,000 because one of the main steps in acquiring FM status is finding an available frequency.

"The first step is to hire a consultant to do a research project," he said. "This person will try to find an available frequency, research wattage options and seek FCC approval. If a frequency cannot be found, then the project cannot be completed and the money stays in SGA funding."

The newly acquired money will be available to WVCW until July 1, 1994, at which time Fleskes can request it be extended for another year if necessary, Stanley said.